



LCSW Assists in Arrest of Suspected Burglars

Once again, the LCSW has played an integral role in the arrest of two would be burglars, helping keep the streets of Lakewood safe for all of us. One evening last week, shortly before 1am, LCSW dispatchers received a call regarding two individuals acting suspiciously in the area of Princeton Avenue and Sixth Street. Responding units did catch up with and observe the pair a few blocks away. They maintained visual contact from a safe distance to monitor what they were doing. A short while later, LCSW volunteers noted that the pair were pulling door handles on cars in an attempt to gain entry and at that point, the police were called. Within minutes, a slew of LPD vehicles arrived on the scene and detained the suspicious individuals who turned out to be juveniles. In particular, Sgt. Erick Mick, and Sgt. Jim Finnigen took the matter extremely seriously and conducted a full investigation of the two. The suspects were found to be in possession of several phones, a GPS unit, a stolen credit card, as well as an Airsoft Desert Eagle look-alike handgun. They were arrested.

This incident is one more proof for the efficacy and vital role played by the LCSW in deterring crime on the streets of Lakewood. But one LCSW coordinator notes that there is much the public can learn from this incident. Both suspects were wearing gloves despite it not being too cold outside that evening. They were also walking the streets in search of vehicles to prey on. The LCSW members spotted them almost four blocks away from where the original sighting had occurred. "From this," he explains, "We can see just how important it is to be vigilant of the small details that might be easily overlooked." In addition, "They were walking pretty fast as they looked for cars to break into. The public should realize that seconds count when it comes to deterring crime. If these two had been armed, they could have caused serious harm if they felt threatened. Any suspicious activity should be called into the LPD and the LCSW immediately." The LCSW is comprised entirely of volunteers and assists local law enforcement and emergency response agencies in a wide range of support activities. To report any suspicious activity, please contact the LCSW 24 hours a day at 732 367 1212.

Lakewood Fire Department News

LFD Looking to Purchase New Fire Chief's Vehicle

On Monday's monthly meeting of the Board of Fire Commissioners, the board discussed the pending purchase of a new Fire Chief's vehicle. Generally these purchases are negotiated through a state vendor and will land Lakewood one of any number of vehicles depending on availability. The purchase of the actual vehicle is expected to amount to approximately \$20-\$25 thousand. Outfitting the vehicle afterwards with equipment, lights, sirens and other tools needed will also cost about just as much with a grand total of somewhere in the area of about \$40 thousand. A portion of the purchase of vehicle will come from the Township through a UEZ grant. Commissioners noted that the vehicle, apart from identifying paintwork and signage will also carry a small note stating that it was purchased in part by UEZ funds.

LFD Investigating Putting Electricity Out to Bid in Third Party Auction

In following along with what the Township has done, the LFD is now seriously investigating switching their utility supplier to a third party. At the 2013 reorganizational meeting, Mayor Isaac Akerman announced that Lakewood could anticipate significant savings on its electric bill in the coming year. As noted at the Commissioners meeting, the MUA has also made the switch. Chairman Juan Ortiz supported the idea noting that he had switched his own personal account and experienced no adverse repercussions. Committeeman Meir Lichtenstein, who attended the meeting, explained a little of how the process worked encouraging the board to look into it.

Energy Market Exchange is a platform where third party power generation suppliers congregate to bid on such work. According to their estimate, a New Jersey municipality is paying 9.2 cents but could be paying 7.1 cents per Kwh. The rates for municipalities seem to be lower than those of the average homeowner. Residential customers are paying 14 cents per Kwh in Lakewood according to a JCPL representative. The company claims its platform has saved clients over \$14M. Providers in the bidding included FirstEnergy Solutions, otherwise known as JCPL, Hess Corporation and South Jersey Energy among others.

LFD Stubbornly Refusing to Change Polling Location

For years, many have complained regarding the location of the fire elections. Traditionally this election has been held at the firehouse on the corner of Route Nine and James Street. There are, however, numerous problems with this location that the LFD fails to consider. In recent years, the Township has expressed their willingness to open Town Hall for the elections should the Board of Fire Commissioners express their desire to use this location. The benefits of using the municipal building over the present location are manifold. One important benefit is that Route Nine is a very busy road. It is dangerous to cross at night, and especially when throngs of people descend on one area to vote it both creates a danger and can at time obstruct traffic along the roadway. In addition to the safety issue, there is significantly more cost associated with the lighting, police presence and other provisions needed to make this area usable by the public. The lack of parking in this area forces the LFD to take out all the fire trucks and this both makes for a crowded situation for voters and would make it difficult for fire response in the event of an emergency during the elections. Since elections take place in the winter months, cold is also an issue. The firehouse garage used to house the election is not well protected from the cold.

Both last year's mayor and this year's, have advised the commissioners that they would agree to open town hall. This would greatly enhance the security of voters, limit our costs, and not obstruct the abilities of the LFD to respond in the case of emergency. Unfortunately, some of the Commissioners have refused the Township's overtures. The excuses for why they wish to remain at their location run the gamut between ridiculous and absurd. Although Commissioner Larry Loigman has brought the idea to the board numerous times, it seems each time that they come up with another reason why it should not be discussed. Some have theorized that the Commissioners would like to keep the turnout as low as possible in order to maintain full control over the district. With elections just around the corner though, hopefully this year a ray of reason will shine on the LFD and the proper choice of location will be made.